

YORK GRADUATE RESEARCH SCHOOL (YGRS) BOARD

Wednesday 26 April 2023, 14:00 - 16:00 via Zoom

Present: Kate Arnold (Chair), Wayne Campbell, Viviane Cao (GSA), Jonny Exon (GSA), Chelsea Grooby (GSA), Andrew Jackson, Juliet James, Steve King (SK), Alison Laird, Richard Ogden, Tom Richens (Secretary), Peter Smith, Sarah Thompson, Sethina Watson, Zhangteng (ZT)

Apologies for absence: Yvonne Birks, Andy Dougill, Ambrose Field, Jane Hill, Tracy Lightfoot, Melissa Nurcombe, Karen Rowlingson, Matthias Ruth,

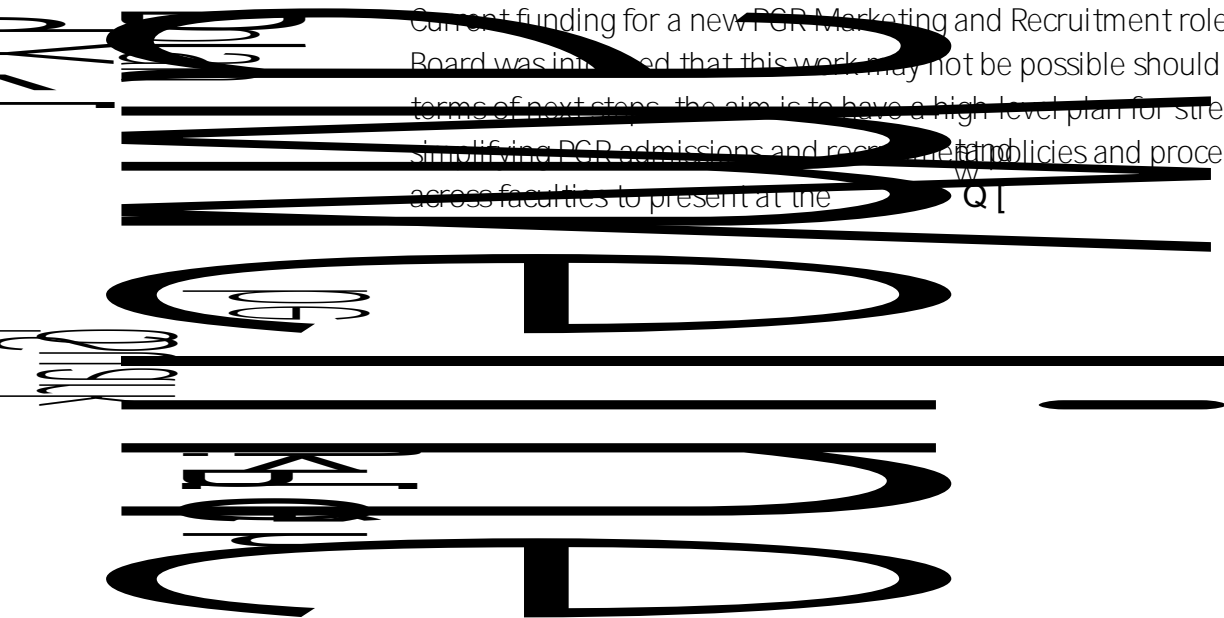
In attendance: Gemma Wheeler (note-taker), Anna Bull (AB) and Vanita Sundaram (VS, for the update on the training for handling staff-student sexual harassment reports), Hannah Smallpage-Hurst (for the PGR Recruitment and Admissions report), Paul Armstrong and Gwion Sims (for the PGR Recruitment update)

M22-23/12: Minutes of the Last Meeting

launched. The initial response from Research England was very positive; this work is a combination of data gathering, applied research and key activities, which will also feed international initiatives. York has been successful in advertising and recruiting to a number of new roles associated with recruitment

objective is to introduce changes to policies and processes around recruitment and selection admissions at PGR level. A consultation phase will be needed next. A timeline for Phase 1 was presented to the Board. Research Culture funding has been secured via RIKE to help fund 2 part-time, fixed-term (6 months to the end of July) graduate roles in the department. YCEDE WS1 has been conducting outreach events to improve knowledge around PhD study, while YCEDE WS2 has launched a survey, external to York, across all 5 YCEDE universities. The two projects are working in tandem, which will be beneficial. As part of the wider work to maintain or increase PGR numbers at York, the 'Supporting Transition into PhD Project' (STIPP) will be appointing a new staff member on a 9-month, fixed-term contract.

Current funding for a new PGR Marketing and Recruitment role is 6 months and the Board was informed that this work may not be possible should funding be lost. In terms of next steps, the aim is to have a high-level plan for streamlining and simplifying PGR admissions and recruitment policies and processes within and across faculties to present at the Q1



EF
 2019

successful in ensuring a good match. The negotiation between academic fit and quality is crucial. Some students leave it quite late to apply, and applications need to be in the system by January each year to meet deadlines for funding.

In Science, individual applications can tend to slip, while those submitted via funders are less affected. The letter of application for scholarships is a potential pinch point.

M22-23/16:

Events such as the Russell Group roadshow with other universities have been beneficial in promoting research at York, and the relationship between the research proposal and discussions with departments and supervisors beyond that point, where Marketing steps back. The International team will talk to overseas candidates on visits to discuss processes.

Research is a crucial part of the York brand. The pandemic has also affected PGRs as well as PGTs: there was a big spike in home applications and enrolments in 2020 and 2021, a similar pattern to that observed with PGROs.

In discussion it was noted that:

The Chair remarked on the improved figures and asked for more detail. Numbers for PGRH are currently approximately 26% down in the Sciences (by 168) but are up in Arts and Humanities, while Social Sciences are steady. Acceptances are remarkably good by comparison: 13 more than this time last year in the Sciences - Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences are very similar (4 lower and 1 lower respectively). The caveat is that pending applications are not in the same volume as this time

admissions and funding processes.

M22-23/19: Update on the training on handling staff-student sexual harassment rep!

processes. It was noted that this work should